



## The Carolina DX Association

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K8YC	John Scott	Editor

# The Pileup

## Newsletter of the CDXA

### “WIN” a Trip to the Caribbean

How would you like to treat your spouse to a trip to the Caribbean and be on the DX end of a radio contact at the same time?? The “winners” here are the spouse who gets to languish in the Caribbean sunshine and you while you participate as DX in the CQWW SSB contest.

Did I get you to read this far? Good! If I did, I’ll tell you that the rest of this article is about radio contesting from the DX end that is fun and a “win-win” if you have a “significant other” in your life. With the radio contesting season just around the corner, we thought we’d give you some food for thought. Also, by starting the planning now, you’ll have plenty of time to do it right, and do it easily.

### Why do it?

As DXers, we’ve all wondered what it must be like to be on the other end of a DX QSO. We may also have struggled to get through the pileup in a big contest such as CQWW. Operating from almost anywhere on a Caribbean isle during CQWW will ensure you a million contest points for a reasonably seri-

ous effort. So, you get the “pleasure of a lifetime” and if you submit your score on behalf of CDXA, the association benefits, too. If you plan your trip around a contest weekend, you and your spouse can enjoy a week on an idyllic Caribbean Island both before and after the hours of the contest weekend, so the spouse gets a benefit from the experience, too. An all around good deal for all involved.

### What are the advantages?

Transportation to the Caribbean is relatively inexpensive if one stays in the more northern latitudes of the Caribbean. The farther south one goes—say to Trinidad—the more transportation expense one is likely to incur, but the choice is yours, and the DXing/Contesting is good anywhere.

Accommodations, at least for the CQWW SSB are still based on the summer rates and are much more reasonable

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CDXA PacketCluster & Other Communication Systems		
W4DXA (11 mi. NE of Mooresville)	144.93 MHz (1200 bits/second)	441.00 MHz (9600 bits/second)
K4MD Charlotte, NC	144.91 MHz (1200 bits/second)	Not Available on 9600 bits/second
NG4DX (Digi near Galax, VA)	144.95 MHz (1200 bits/second) Connect to NG4DX, then type “C W4DXA”	
K4MD (AR Cluster via Telnet)	k4md.no-ip.com	
CDXA Repeater 147.18 MHz (+600 )	W4DXA, Near Fort Mill, SC	
World Wide Web Homepage	www.cdxa.org	
Wednesday Luncheon (11:30 AM)	Shoney’s, 355 Woodlawn Road, Charlotte, NC (704-525-4395)	

## What's around the corner?

*(Adapted from Discover magazine, June 2006.)*

DXers are incessant “sun worshipers”—at least as far as solar flux, sunspots, and coronal mass ejections (CME) are concerned. We know that the sunspot we saw on the face of Ole’ Sol last month *may* reappear as the sun completes its approximately monthly rotation. But, we won’t really know until it comes “around the corner”. Large solar storms have been known to cause disruptions in satellite communications and interfere with airplane navigation systems. Scientists at NASA’s Solar and Heliospheric Observatory (SOHO) satellite now have way to peer right through the sun and anticipate whether a large solar storm is likely to appear from around the corner.

Scientists do this by listening to sounds created by the sun! Each second about 7,000 hot plasma bubbles about the size of California rise to the surface of the sun and “pop” with a resulting sound wave. As these sound waves reverberate through the sun’s interior, they reflect off the surface of the sun’s far side before returning to the front. The returning waves create a slight ripple that SOHO’s instruments can detect. Sound waves encountering a magnetically active region on the far side speed up and return to the front side sooner than normal. SOHO can interpret these early returning sound waves and predict a brewing magnetic storm.

This newly developed technique will provide advance warning to satellite operators, space travelers, air traffic controllers, and yes—even amateur radio operators!

### The Pileup

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The purpose of the association is to secure for the members the pleasures and benefits of the association of persons having a common interest in Amateur Radio.

Members of the CDXA shall adhere to “The Amateur’s Code” as published from time to time in *The ARRL Handbook for Radio Amateurs*, and shall consist of those valid licensed amateur operators having an interest in promoting amateur radio. Long distance communications (DX) is of special interest to members of the association, but said interest is not a requirement of membership.

Dues are \$30 per year for those using the PacketCluster maintained by the Association, \$15 otherwise, payable each January. Dues are payable by check to the Secretary/Treasurer:  
Cliff Wagoner, W3ZL  
P. O. Box 577  
Davidson, NC 28036

Address, telephone, and email address changes should be directed to the Secretary/Treasurer at the above address or via email at: cliffw@adelphia.net.

## Charles E. “Chuck” Brady, N4BQW, SK

Amateur radio lost one of its fine representatives on July 23 with the passing of Astronaut “Chuck” Brady. News of Chuck’s passing came at us via the CDXA Reflector, the ARRL Newsletter, and countless news media sources. All sources told the story that America lost a fine citizen that day.

Comments made by a number of CDXA members on the reflector indicated that a number of us have worked Chuck over the years. To a man, comments indicated that here was a man who had his feet firmly on the ground despite spending a lot of time on the STS-78 Shuttle Mission outside the earth’s atmosphere. Chuck was one of the pioneers for SAREX (Shuttle Amateur Radio Experiment) which gave countless school children the opportunity to talk with Astronauts on passes over their countries. Indeed, one such opportunity was given to students in the auditorium at Discovery Place here in Charlotte, NC. Chuck also saw the value of amateur radio in creating some normalcy during extended missions in space by allowing the astronauts to speak with folks home via amateur radio—a non-official channel of communication. As the long stays on the International Space Station have become commonplace, the value of amateur radio in improving morale and helping with the psychological adjustment has become evident. Chuck had the vision of this need as a flight surgeon and mission specialist for NASA and made it known to NASA officials. Now most astronauts, if not all, hold amateur radio licenses.

Brady had roots in North Carolina where he graduated from UNC in 1971 and earned his medical degree from Duke University in 1975. He called Robbins his hometown where he graduated from high school.

While Chuck activated a number of rarer American Pacific Islands, probably his most notable operation was his 3Y0C operation from Bouvet Island in January 2001. Lots of folks stayed up late and listened intently for Chuck those nights. Perhaps it was because Chuck had to repeatedly reconstruct his antennas which were casualties of the fierce winds of Bouvet. Nevertheless, he stayed the course to give many Bouvet.

He’ll be missed. ●●● — ●—

*(A more complete summary can be found on the ARRL website. Search on “BRADY”)*

## DXCC Honor Roll

We've put our new statistician to work to find all CDXA members on a recent Honor Roll list. Below, is the list of all CDXA members found on the DXCC Honor Roll.

Callsign	Mixed	Phone	CW	RTTY
AA4R	334	331	328	
AA4S	335	334		
AA4V	334	334	333	
AK4N	333			
K2SD	329			
K4BVQ	334	331		
K4CEB	334		333	
K4CIA	334	334	332	
K4DXA		334		
K4MD	335			
K4MK		332		
K4MQG	335	334	333	
K4QVK		328		
K4ZA	329			
K4ZO	334	330		
KZ2I	334	334		
N2TU	335	335	334	331
N4AA	334			
N4JJ	333	333	332	
N4PQX	331	331		
N4TN	330			
N4UH	333			
N4XO	335			
N4ZC	333	330		
N4ZX	332			
N4ZY	332			
W1WW	334			
W3NC		329		
W3OA	332	332		
W4AG	334			
W4CCW	327			
W4LK	333			
W4MBD	335	335		
W4UNP	333			
W4UW	334	334	328	
W4VHF	334	334		
W4ZV	335			
WA4MWX	330			

## Awards Update

After firing the CDXA statistician last year and hiring a new one at double the salary (2 x \$0=\$0), we thought we had our statistical "failings" behind us. Alas, the recent listing of DXCC Challenge award showed our old bugaboo still exists! To the rescue came our Contest Manager, Dick Williams (W3OA). With some intelligent searching of the web, Dick found a neat little "freeware" scripting program which helps to automate the tedious task of searching ARRL PDF files for CDXA member's call signs.

As a result of searching the Challenge award list using a recent CDXA roster to pair up names, the following members were found to also be on the Challenge list:

Callsign	Challenge Count
K4VNY	1727
W3OA	1153
NK0S	1071
N4HN	1012

We've also heard from "**Hutch**" **Hutchison** (NK0S/HL9HP/YS9HH) by direct email that he's just received his 17m Endorsement to his 5BDXCC award.

W3OA's script showed that 70 members of CDXA hold the DXCC award representing at least 100 entities to their credit. Confirmed entity counts range from 100 to 376. The late Dave Kennedy (N4SU) had been high on the list with 383 entities (including deleted entities), but now **Bill Tippett (W4ZV)** sits atop the list of CDXA members with 376 entities confirmed.

## CDXA Members "Stump" for Office

Two members of CDXA are currently on the ballot seeking election to an office, but it's not a CDXA office they're seeking. Bill Jennings, W4UNP, and Gary Dixon, K4MQG, are running for Secretary-Treasurer and Vice-President, respectively, of INDEXA. You are probably familiar with INDEXA as an organization, which through dues and donations, supports DXpeditions to a number of the rarer DX locations each year. A number of CDXA members are also members of INDEXA.

Ballots were distributed as part of the Summer issue of the newsletter. They are due back to INDEXA by 30 September 2006. We wish Bill and Gary good luck with their foray into the "political" world!

## CDXA Scores in 2005 CQWW SSB Contest

By Dick Williams, W3OA

The final results of last year's CQ World Wide SSB Contest are published in the August issue of CQ. The results of the CDXA Contest Within A Contest (CWAC) have been on our web site since last December and these allowed us to see how our members did in comparison to each other. The results in CQ allow us to see how our members did against all the other competition. Listed below, in alphabetical order, are the calls of all the CDXA SSB CWAC entrants who scored in the top half of their class as listed in CQ. The last column shows the entrant's place in his class and the number of entrants in that class.

We hope to have similar information for the CW contest next month. Mark your calendar for this year's CQWW contests. SSB is the weekend of October 28, CW the weekend of November 25.

Call	Final Score	Area	Class	Place/No in Class
AA4V	1,314,378	Saint Martin	Multi Op, Single Transmitter	1/1
AD4IE	103,806	US – Call Area 4	Single Op, Low Power, All Bands	18/66
K4GHS	245,110	US – Call Area 4	Single Op, High Power, All Bands	22/47
KR4M	447,720	US – Call Area 4	Single Op, High Power, All Bands	12/47
KU4V	125,846	US – Call Area 4	Single Op, Low Power, All Bands	14/66
KZ2I	342,808	US – Call Area 4	Single Op, High Power, All Bands	18/47
N1GC	702,039	US – Call Area 4	Single Op, High Power, All Bands	6/47
N4AA	523,940	US – Call Area 4	Single Op, High Power, All Bands	9/47
N4PQX	1,098,096	US – Call Area 4	Single Op, High Power, All Bands	4/47
N4ZC	328,410	US – Call Area 4	Single Op, High Power, All Bands	19/47
W3OA	876,129	US – Call Area 4	Single Op, Assisted, All Bands	8/45
W4UNP	264,228	US – Call Area 4	Single Op, Assisted, All Bands	20/45
W4WNT	60,140	US – Call Area 4	Single Op, Low Power, All Bands	23/66
W4WTB	2,066,128	US – Call Area 4	Single Op, Assisted, All Bands	2/45
W6NWS	529,573	US – Call Area 4	Single Op, High Power, All Bands	8/47
WB2RHM	215,031	US – Call Area 4	Single Op, Low Power, All Bands	6/66

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### Team Contesting???

Find four of your serious contesting buddies, call them on the phone and make up a team of five single-ops for CQWW. If you don't have that big multi-multi station at your disposal, stay in your respective shacks, give it your best shot, and submit your scores as a team. This is a form of contesting that seems to be overlooked as a way to participate as a group and earn some international recognition for good operating performance. The best part is the individual team members may submit their scores also on behalf of their club. Also, they can participate with a different grouping for each of CQWW-SSB and CQWW-CW. I can think of at least a dozen serious testers in CDXA from which five stations would make a serious contest team submission. Are you interested? Put your own team together, or contact any of your officers so we can help put a team together.

### Welcome New Members

CDXA is happy to welcome as a new member **Catherine Hage (WB4CAT)** of Mooresville. Catherine is also a member of the Dixie Radio Pirates (N4ARR) where she met fellow buccaneers (and CDXA members) Bill Fisher, Bill Clark, and Phil Martin. She's been seen atop Spencer Mountain with her fellow "pirates" in various contests, and has been keeping busy this summer collecting grid squares on 6 meters.

A welcome also goes out to **Richard Dodd (KG4PBG)** of Charlotte. Richard has been seen of late at several CDXA Wednesday luncheons. Richard is also a member of the Mecklenburg Amateur Radio Society (MARS). He has recently taken on the role of editor for MARS, so those of you who are also members of MARS will soon be seeing Richard's handiwork via their newsletter.

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than the winter rates which are designed to wrest some moolah from the “snow birds” seeking escape from the winter winds of states north of the Mason-Dixon line.

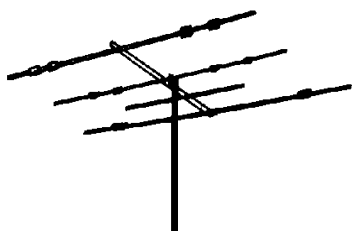
Operating from one of the islands in a big contest is almost a sure thing for a big score. If you operate from an island, your frequency privileges are often different from the U.S. mainland. You can often operate using phone privileges in portions of the bands which are off limits to the U.S. mainland. This alone ensures you lots of opportunities to work other continents without “interference” from U.S. mainland contesters, and that means three point QSOs, and lots of zone and country multipliers. Furthermore, you represent a new “country” to contesters all over the world who will seek YOU out.

Licensing is usually a breeze. Some Caribbean countries are CEPT treaty signatories, meaning all you need is your domestic license and a copy of the CEPT agreement. Even if not a CEPT signatory, usually licensing is not a difficult task—although it may take some advanced planning. The ARRL is a good source for licensing requirements and often can provide local contacts to help ease you through the process.

There are often hams in the Caribbean who have stations for rent for contest weekends. In this case, you may need to pack no radio equipment at all! Otherwise, you may need a simple transceiver and a switching power supply to get on the air. Many resorts, because the contest is off-season, are very accommodating as regards stringing up antennas. Or, if you find a ham-rental, the antennas are there already waiting for you.

There are lots of fellows in CDXA who can provide “how to” information. Some that come to mind who’ve operated in the Caribbean are Roger Burt, Don Daso, and Steve Reichlyn.

**The next step is yours to take!**



## The Toolbox

By Don Daso, K4ZA

(Reprinted with permission of PVRC)

Headphones have long been one of my favorite subjects. Part of that interest and fascination is, I’m sure, the fact that it’s so difficult to be objective about them! Yes, one can analyze various factors, but in the end, it’s one’s own, personal reaction to them that counts the most. Obviously, manufacturers long ago jumped on this bandwagon. For a more critical look at this seemingly simply topic, move your mouse over to:

<http://www.headphone.com/>

and review what’s available.

You’re amazed—you had no idea that many headphone variations were possible, let alone on the market, right?? If this tip of the iceberg exposure piques your interest, check out the *Loudspeaker and Headphone Handbook*, edited by John Borwick, Focal Press, 2001 (ISBN: 0-240-51578-1), for an in-depth technical analysis and look at the subject. Computer modeling over speakers is as involved as antenna modeling, for instance. But again, in the end, it’s what you like that counts.

I’ve always used headphones in my radio work. It just seems logical to me to do so. Indeed, I’m always amazed to visit a shack and see a speaker prominently displayed. And the tiny ones inside the radio aren’t worth that much, I’m afraid. I’m sure this love affair with headsets harks back to radio’s earliest days—when they were standard items. And, as many know, I’ve always liked the idea of getting back to that, or as close as possible, anyway, to something more romantic (in the classic sense). Headphones do that for me. Besides, I don’t want to miss anything.

So, I started out with some old Cannon jobs from WW-II. The chamois cushions were right out of every B-17 radio op war movie ever made. Signals sounded bright but tinny, and they’d rattle if you cranked a little too much gain out of the BC-348, but they were what I had. I moved to some \$4.00 stereo cans from early Radio Shack stores. I literally wore them out. The wide frequency response uncovered a whole new experience of listening to the actual noise produced by the radio’s

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audio amplifier. I spent considerable time with various filters fighting against that. By then, having grown up and gotten jobs, I dabbled (tried, rejected, etc.) a wide variety of models: Sennheiser, Koss, Beyer, Clark and so forth. (I remain one of the few folks I know who actually **LIKES** the old, heavy, bulky PRO-4 series of headphones, for instance.)

By this time, I “knew what I liked” or wanted in a headset:

- Full muff earpads—covering the ear makes sense and cuts out noise
- Stereo—frequency response for communications is limited, but having some bass and high end response helps in pileups, trust me
- A soft headband—as I lost my hair, this became more important
- A sturdy cord—seemingly forgotten by some manufacturers
- A microphone—after learning to contest on phone, this is/was vital

So, if your rig has a good audio section, you can benefit from good headphones. And what about that audio, anyway? Filters, as we’ve long known, should be close to the antenna, to be the most effective. But audio filtering shouldn’t be ignored—simple units, like the Daiwa, or the DSP-boxes, from Timewave and the like, can be effective QRM/QRN fighters. Operating techniques vary, of course, and testers may not benefit as much from such filtering as the casual operator or DXer, who’s less concerned with time (rate), and so forth. The point is that effective audio can go a long way toward making communication easier, and that includes the quality of the sound one sends through one’s headphones.

I recently purchased some \$15 headphones from a local CVS pharmacy, like those mentioned by KE3Q on the PVRC reflector. It took trips to three stores to find any here in Charlotte, by the way, but they seem worth the price. They’re small (tight on my head), but do what their box says they do. I cannot accurately compare them to the higher-priced Heil or Sony or Bose units, having never used those models. I’m not sure I could wear them for extended periods, for instance. But then, I’ve long been a proponent of not only different chairs, but different headsets, as a way to ease one’s physical comfort during a contest. In fact, these headphones

may yet appear on the eham.net website: <http://www.eham.net/reviews/products/9> where you can find over 50 headphones reviewed, giving you more subjective headphone info than you thought possible!

If price is not a mitigating factor, you may consider what are most likely the best noise canceling headphones—the kind worn on stage by rock musicians (performing right next to LOUD loudspeakers). These headsets are simply amazing, in that they’re created in a life-mold of your own ear. They shut out everything, have good sonic quality, along with a hefty price tag. At the very least, it’s worth a visit to this website:

<http://www.ultimateears.com/>

which describes them in depth.

My choice, for all-around use, comfort, sonic quality, and longevity? Sony’s model MDR-7506 headphones. Alas, they do not come in a communications headset configuration—you cannot easily attach a microphone, so I use Heils for phone—but besides that, they’re simply the best headphones I’ve ever used. I’ve owned two pairs of them for over 10 years, using them in my production business as well as for hamming. If you read reviews in some of the audiophile magazines, you’ll encounter critics who mention a mid-range “peak” in the 7506 response. While that may hinder music enjoyment, it can help ham radio work. On a comfort level, they’re simply great—light enough to be worn 48 hours. The cushions can and do wear out, but are easily replaced. In fact, another plus is that they come with an instruction sheet, showing you how to disassemble them, along with a parts list. Nylon covers will improve cushion wear and increase their life. Finally, having both a 3mm plug AND a 1/4-inch plug is another nice feature. Try them; I don’t think you’ll be disappointed. —K4ZA

## Tower Works

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**Don Daso**

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e-mail: k4za@juno.com



## It's in the History Books—Now We Must Wait and See!

In the July issue of the **Pileup**, we learned that Ted and Itice Goldthorpe were going to be out roving to see if they couldn't earn their seventh consecutive national title as rovers in the CQ July VHF contest. Conditions were outstanding for the Goldthorpes as well as for the Bill and Josh Fisher and Ed Swiderski who was out doing his hilltopping again. Yet, those same good conditions make predicting success all the more difficult as everyone had good conditions. Now all must wait. Below is our intrepid pair at the end of a long weekend.



**Ted and Itice's wheels finally stop rolling after four grid squares in two days, lots of QSOs and too little sleep.**

## Andaman "Travelogue" Recap

On Thursday, August 3, nearly 50 members and friends of CDXA gathered at St. Andrews Episcopal church to see the photos of Joe Blackwell (AA4NN) and hear a recount of his recent trip to the Andaman Islands as part of the Andaman's Hamfest 2006. The hamfest was an outgrowth of the very successful emergency communications effort put forth by Indian "hams" following the tsunami of late 2004 which took thousands of lives in the Indian Ocean basin. In a strange turn of events, Indian officials who made operating amateur radios from the Andaman Islands nearly impossible for many years have suddenly come to realize that ham radio is there "when everything else fails."

Joe's talk highlighted his journey to the islands, the rather "spartan" accommodations, some creative use of bamboo as local materials for antenna masts, and events of the hamfest itself.

The "pot luck" format was the first time CDXA tried that in recent years. Each family brought an entree sufficient to feed four people and a salad or side dish for four people. Club officers were asked to substitute a dessert for their side dishes. Purchased dishes were fair game, but there were many delicious home favorites on the table. Yummmmmmm!



**Plenty of home-cooked family recipes arrived with those who attended.**

In concluding his remarks, Joe informed us the Indian Government is now working through the process of granting access privileges to Lakshadweep Islands (VU7). If it comes to pass, Joe hopes to be one of the privileged few who will go and give us all a crack at another "rare one". We hope there is another pot luck, too!!!



**Treasurer, Cliff Waggoner (W3ZL) gets the details from Joe Blackwell (AA4NN) before the dinner and slide show begins.**

## The Back Page

Win a trip to the **Caribbean**! It will be a win-win for both ham and spouse if one can enjoy the islands and the other can **BE** one of the DX for CQWW this fall. See page 1.

We're finally really getting a handle on finding out who's received a specific award. Dick Williams, W3OA, created a neat scripting program to search PDF files to find CDXA member callsigns. We've found all **Challenge Award** winners and we believe we have all **DXCC Honor Roll** members on the first try this time! See Page 3.

How about a **contesting "Team" for CQWW**? An alternative to a multi-multi station. See Page 4.

Joe Blackwell's (AA4NN) **Andaman Island** "Travelogue" was wonderfully informative, and the food was great, too! See Page 7.

Don't forget the second annual **SEDCO Conference** will be held in Pigeon Forge, TN on September 30 in conjunction with the Ten-Tec Hamfest. Last year's attendees reported this was a great conference. (See <http://www.sedco.homestead.com> for information.)

The annual **CDXA Barbeque** will be held at Frank Dowd's "spread" on October 7. Don't forget to put this on your calendar. More in the September issue of the **PILEUP**.

Are you a CDXA member/businessperson who has goods and/or services of interest to other members of CDXA? We are thinking of periodically having a **Community Page** in the Pileup. On this page, we will allow a "business card" type of advertisement to be entered for anyone with services of interest to CDXA members. Examples might be electrical contracting, landscaping, tower work, health services, radio repair/equipment, or information technology services. If a "community page" is of interest to you, please contact the editor.

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## First Class Mail

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